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November 15, 2017

Ms. Bridget Lidy, Director
Tourism Management and Ambassadorship Department
City of Savannah
P.O. Box 1027
Savannah, GA 31402

Dear Bridget,


Historic Savannah Foundation (HSF) offers this letter of support for the Renaissance Strategic Visioning and Planning (RSVP) program. There is a pronounced need for a clear roadmap for growth and management in the National Historic Landmark District as well as downtown's surrounding historic districts (Victorian District, Thomas Square, west end of River Street, MLK corridor, etc.). Development pressures on the subject area often compete with the Oglethorpe Plan, human scale, and historic architecture. A new plan that respects those elements will help protect Savannah's identity and brand.

While the existing Downtown Master Plan (2011) outlines a diversity of wants and needs present for downtown, it has been sitting on the sidelines while the City undergoes a building boom. The need for a solid new plan—that is used—is critical. Affordable housing, public transportation, pedestrian-friendly and bike-friendly policies and, of course, greater sensitivity to the fragility of the historic districts noted above should be priorities within a new plan.

Historic Savannah Foundation's mission is to save buildings, places, and stories that define Savannah's past, present, and future. HSF encourages the City of Savannah to pursue the RSVP program, and ensure an inclusive and effective process (and product). Moreover, once the plan is complete, we urge the City to use it in guiding Savannah's future.

HSF looks forward to having a seat at the table during the RSVP program.

Sincerely,



Daniel G. Carey
President & CEO